

Key Ideas

- **Colonial Art: 1600s to 1770s.** Artists typically were immigrants (mostly from England) as there were few opportunities for proper artistic training in the Colonies. Portraits were the most popular type of art produced.
- **The New Nation: Mid-1770s to 1820s.** Formation of the United States of America, with the development of myths, traditions, and customs by which inhabitants began to define themselves as “Americans.” Portraits of new American leaders were especially popular.
- **Self-Discovery: 1820-1860.** American art moves beyond portraiture, into landscapes and genre scenes. Artists have better training, but they still often travel to complete their education, finally returning to America to participate in the cultural growth of the country.
- **At Home and Abroad: 1860-1900.** The nation begins to assert itself beyond its continental limits, with artists helping define the developing American character—the concern for religion, land, and Americans’ place in the world. European styles and themes still are present in American art, but American artists start to take what they learn abroad and develop it into a uniquely American expression.

Adapted from Matthew Baigell’s, *A Concise History of American Painting and Sculpture*, 1996



But in America, the hierarchy is turned upside-down!

Source: Khan Academy, British Colonies to the Early Republic. Inset, Frederic Edwin Church, *Niagara*, 1857.

Portraiture



American Portraiture (Colonial Art)

John Singleton Copley,
*Portrait of Sarah Allen,
née Sargent*, c. 1763, 41.3

“Copley adapted his
composition from a
mezzotint after William
Hogarth's painting of
Frances, Lady Byron.”
(artsmia.org)

Mezzotint: a manner of
engraving on copper or steel
by scraping or burnishing a
roughened surface to
produce light and shade.
Used most effectively to
reproduce paintings.

“Copley adapted his composition from a mezzotint after William Hogarth's painting of Frances, Lady Byron.” *Frances Byron (née Berkeley), Lady Byron* by John Faber Jr, after William Hogarth, mezzotint, 1736. National Portrait Gallery, London.



American Portraiture...

John Singleton Copley, *Boy with Flying Squirrel* (Henry Pelham), 1765, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Copley sends this portrait to exhibition in London, where it is well-received by Benjamin West and Sir Joshua Reynolds ...but...Reynolds says Copley must receive proper training by studying abroad before his “Manner and Taste were corrupted or fixed by working in [his] little way at Boston.”

(mfa.org)



American Portraiture

Benjamin West,
*Portrait of Diana
Mary Barker*,
1766, 31.39

An American painter in London... “The sitter, seventeen-year-old Lady Diana Mary Barker, resided at Speen House in Berkshire, England.”
(artsmia.org)

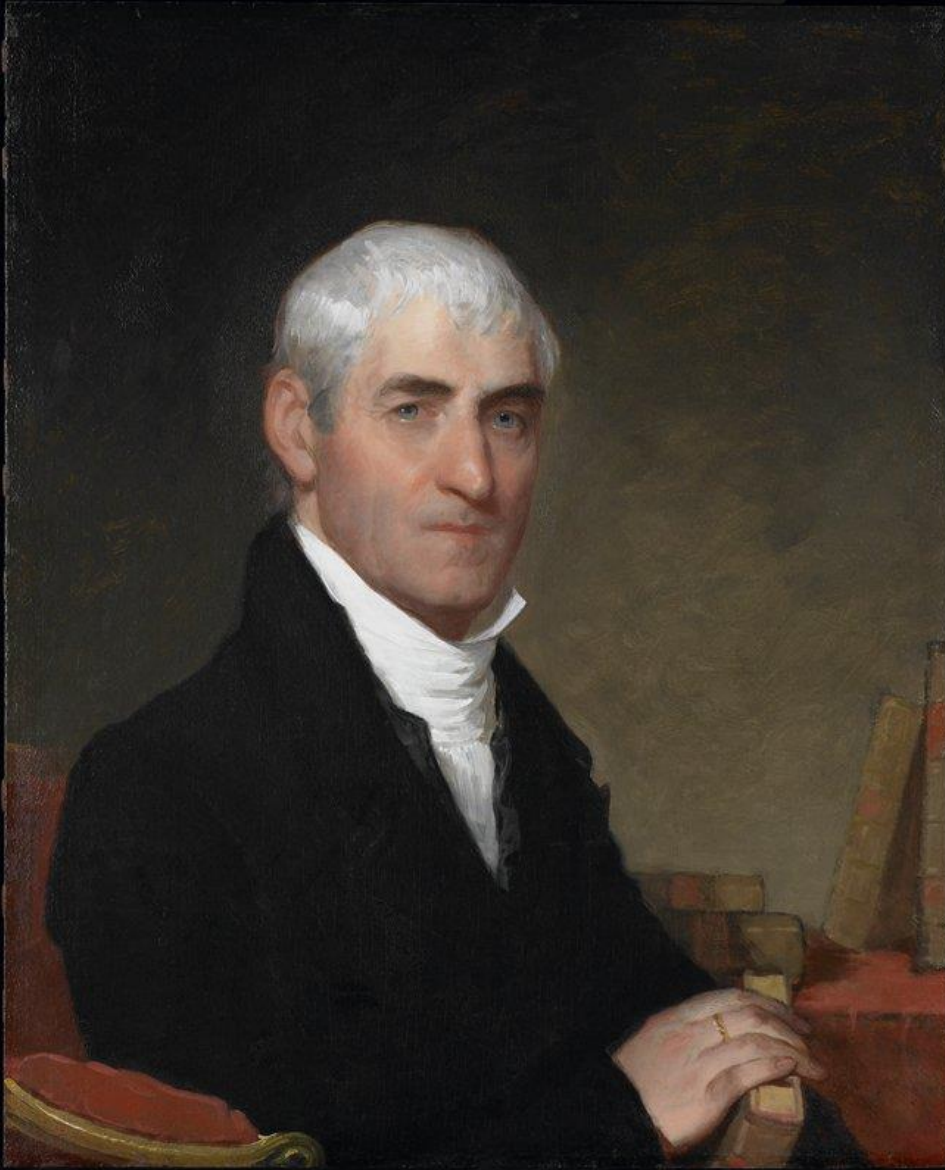


Benjamin West was influenced by the neoclassical portraiture of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Mrs. Froude, née Phyllis Hurrell (d. 1826), 1762 and Anne, Countess of Strafford, 1758–59



Benjamin West influenced a new generation of American painters, such as Gilbert Stuart, who trained with West in London.



Portrait of James Ward, 1779, 16.2; Inset, Portrait of Alexander Townsend, 1809, 51.34; and Portrait of Judge Daniel Cony of Maine, c. 1815, 75.29.1

American Portraiture

American
Portraiture... Check out
the Period Rooms!

Joseph Badger, *Portrait of Abigail Gowen*,
1763, 70.33.5, and Attributed to Joseph
Badger, *Portrait of Mary Crosswell*, 1763,
70.33.6 (in the Connecticut Room)



American
Portraiture

Jeremiah Theus, *Portrait of Mrs. Gardner Greene*, 1770, 31.38 and *Portrait of Marcy Olney* (1749 - 1780?), c. 1771, 25.402 (in the Charleston Drawing Room) (Inset, Mrs. John Dart, 1772-1774, metmuseum.org)



American Portraiture:
The New Nation
(Celebration of
American Heroes)

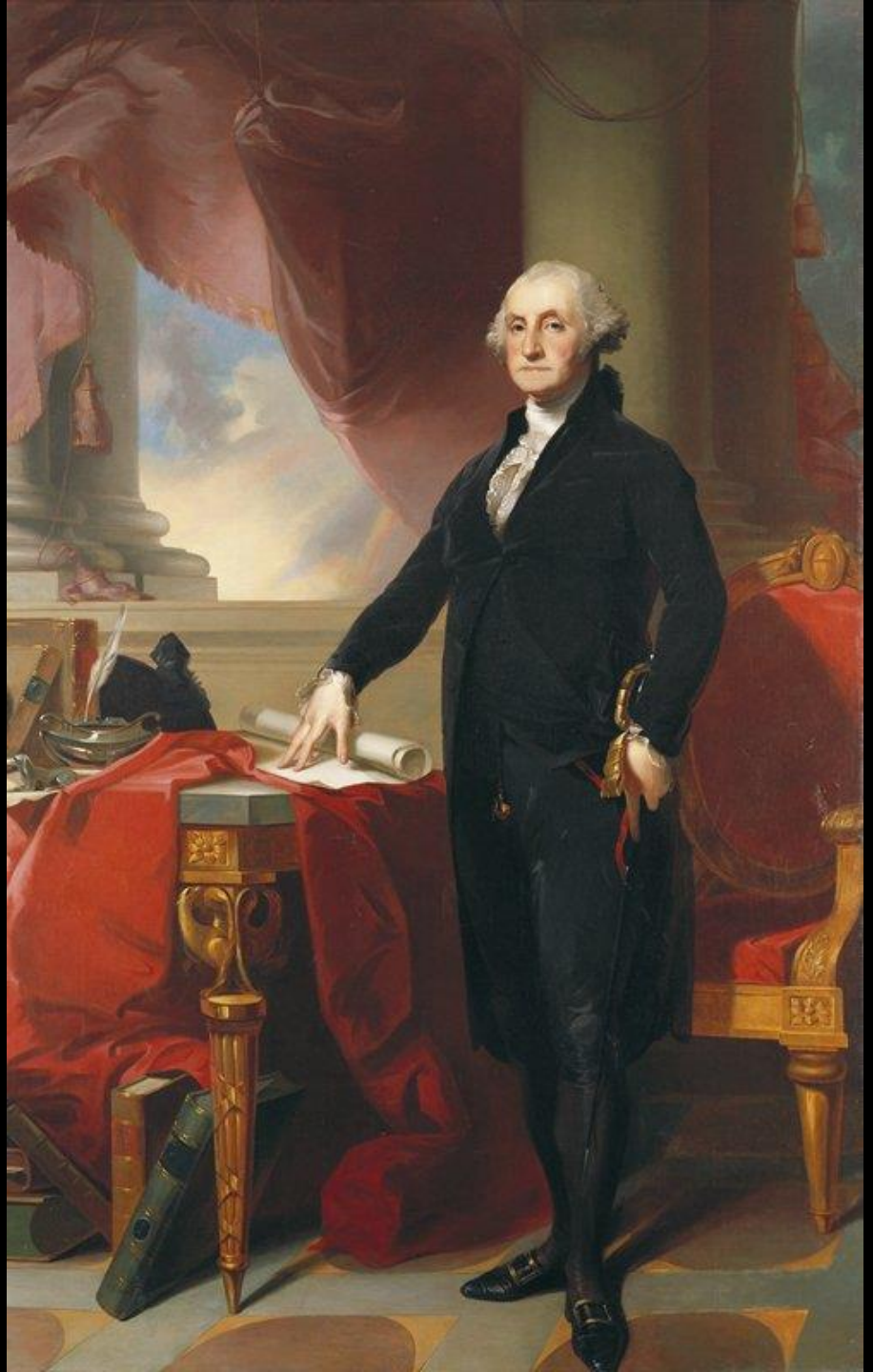
Rembrandt Peale,
*Portrait of
Commander Lewis
Warrington*, 1801-
1802, 31.53



American Portraiture:
The New Nation
(Celebration of
American Heroes)

John Wesley Jarvis,
*Portrait of Captain
Samuel Chester
Reid*, 1815, 45.6







Portrait of
1745,



“How he acquired his artistic skill is not known, but he likely was self-taught. He traveled around the Midwest in search of clients to paint, most of whom were average men and women...” (artsmia.org)

American Portraiture...

Orlando Hand Bears, *Portrait of Eliza Ann
and Adelia Dusenberry*, 1838, 2008.84



American Portraiture...

Attributed to James B. Read, *Portrait of a Boy*, 1856, 77.46 and William Jennys, *Portrait of Moses Kimball, Jr.*, c. 1808, 97.6



History Painting (history, religion, literature, and mythology)

History Painting

Benjamin West, *Destruction of the Beast and the False Prophet*, 1804, 15.22. (Inset, *The Death of General Wolfe*, 1770)



(American) History Painting

Alonzo Chappel, *The Ride of General Marion's Men*, c. 1850, 44.15

General Marion was better known as "The Swamp Fox," famous for his daring raids against the British during the Revolutionary War

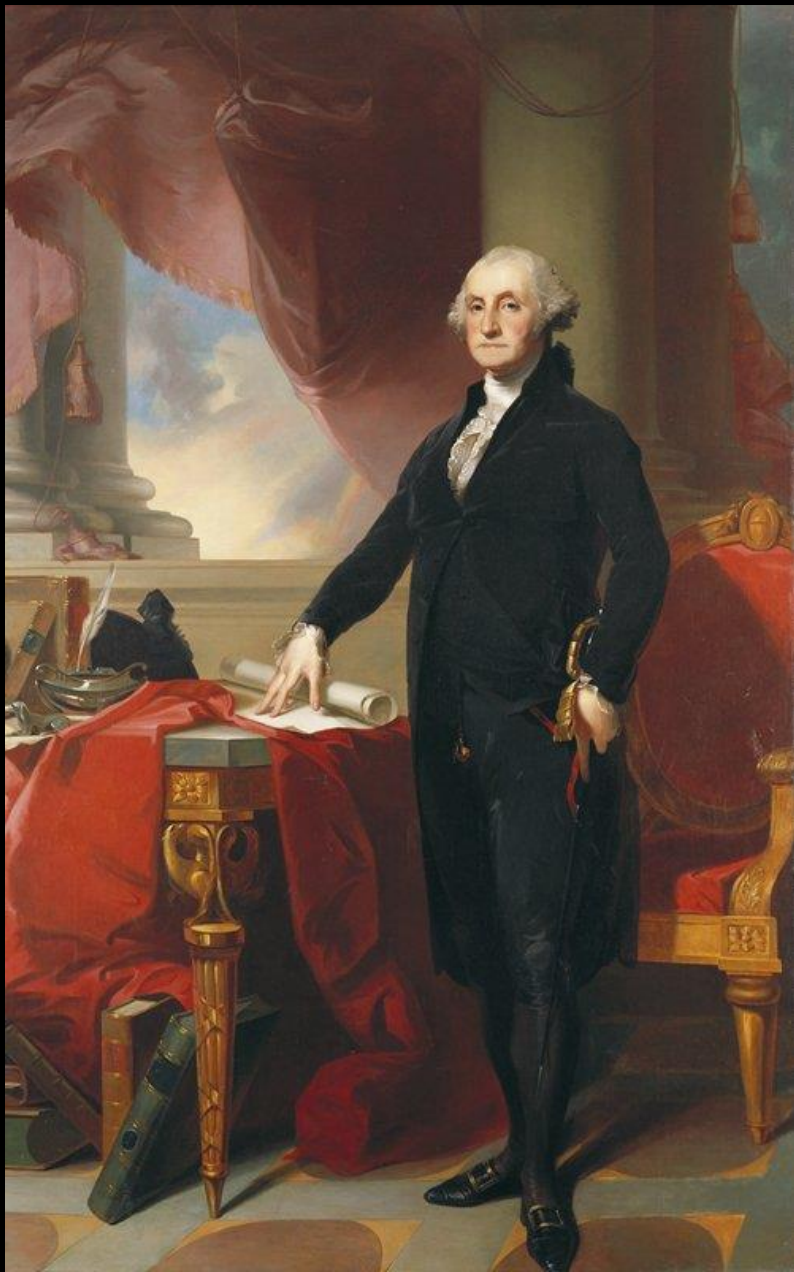
(artsmia.org).



Sculpture

American Sculpture





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(Inset,
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American Sculpture

Randolph Rogers, *The
Lost Pleiad*, 1874
(modeled), 2004.194

“[Merope] and her
sisters form the
group of stars known
as the Pleiades.”
(artsmia.org)



American Sculpture

Frederick William
MacMonnies, *Diana with a
Bow*, 1890, 64.62



American Sculpture

Frederic Remington, *Bronco Buster*, 19th century,
91.120.2



Genre Painting

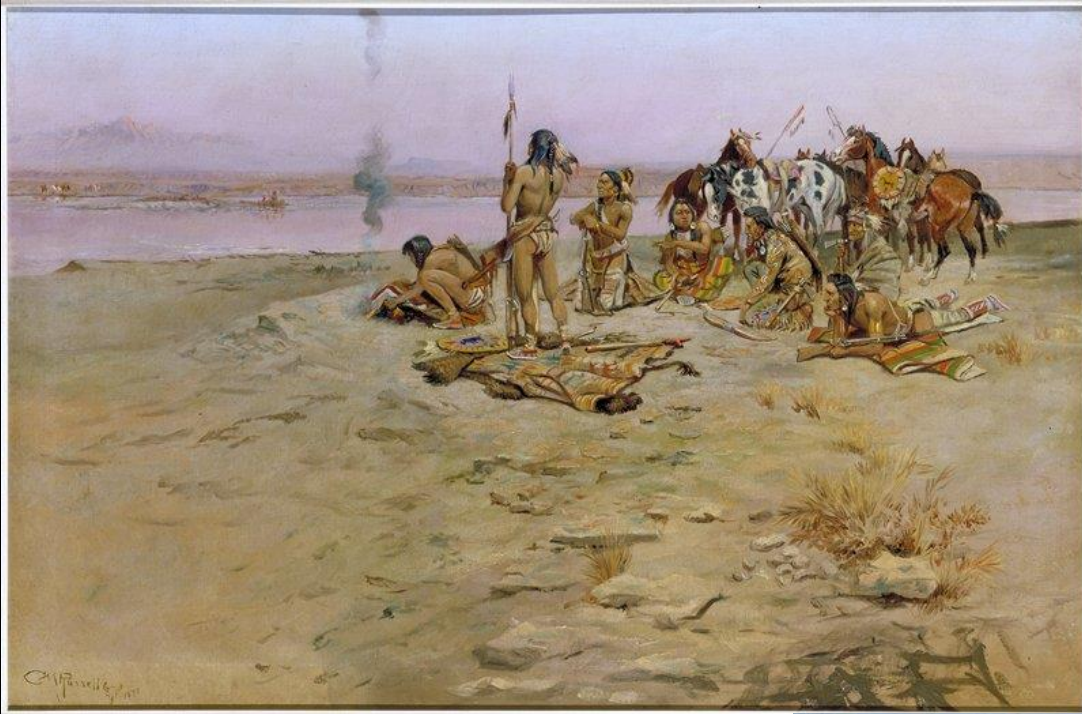


...e, 1867, 74.17 (charcoal and graphite)



Daniel Ridgway
Knight, *Girl by a
Stream, Flanders, c.
1890*, 64.20

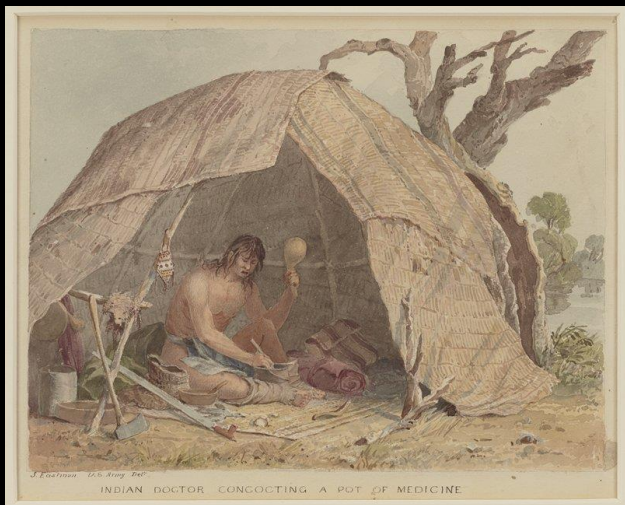




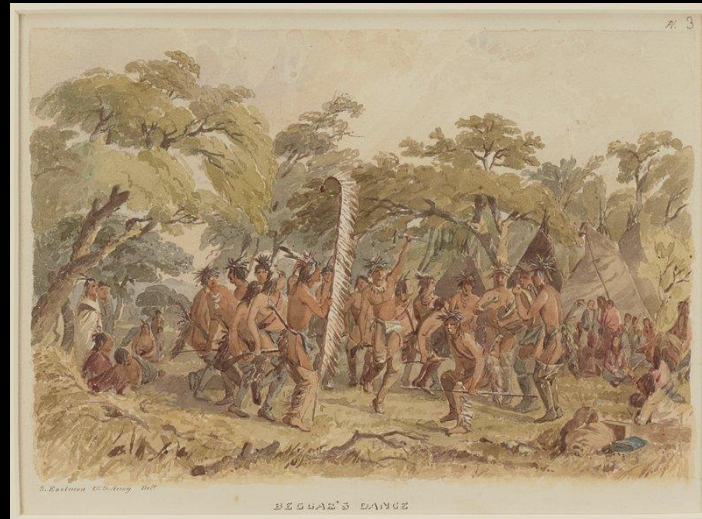
Charles M. Russell, *The Signal Fire*, 1897, 80.64 and *Buffalo Hunt*, 1891, 83.149



What questions might you receive if showing illustrations like these?
“they constitute an unparalleled visual account of native ways in our region.” (artsmia.org)



Seth Eastman,
Illustrations for
Schoolcraft’s
*Historical and
Statistical
Information
Respecting the
History, Condition
and Prospects of
the Indian Tribes
of the United
States, 1849-1855*



Landscape

Thomas Cole, *Landscape*, 1825, 15.299 (not on view)



Alvan Fisher, *Approaching Storm, White Mountains*, 1820s, 2009.16.4



Compare and contrast
Thomas Chambers, *View of
West Point*, c. 1850, 44.12
with Jasper Francis Cropsey,
Catskill Mountain House,
1855, 31.47, looking at the
use of color, composition,
and light.



If you could only have
one of these landscapes
on a tour of American
art, which would you
choose and why?

Thomas Chambers, *View of West Point*, c. 1850, 44.12



Jasper Francis Cropsey, *Catskill Mountain House*, 1855, 31.47



Homer Dodge Martin, *Hudson River Landscape*, c. 1860-1865, 2001.92



Albert Bierstadt, *The Merced River in Yosemite*, 1868, 81.6



Albert Bierstadt, *Landscape*, c. 1890, 61.51



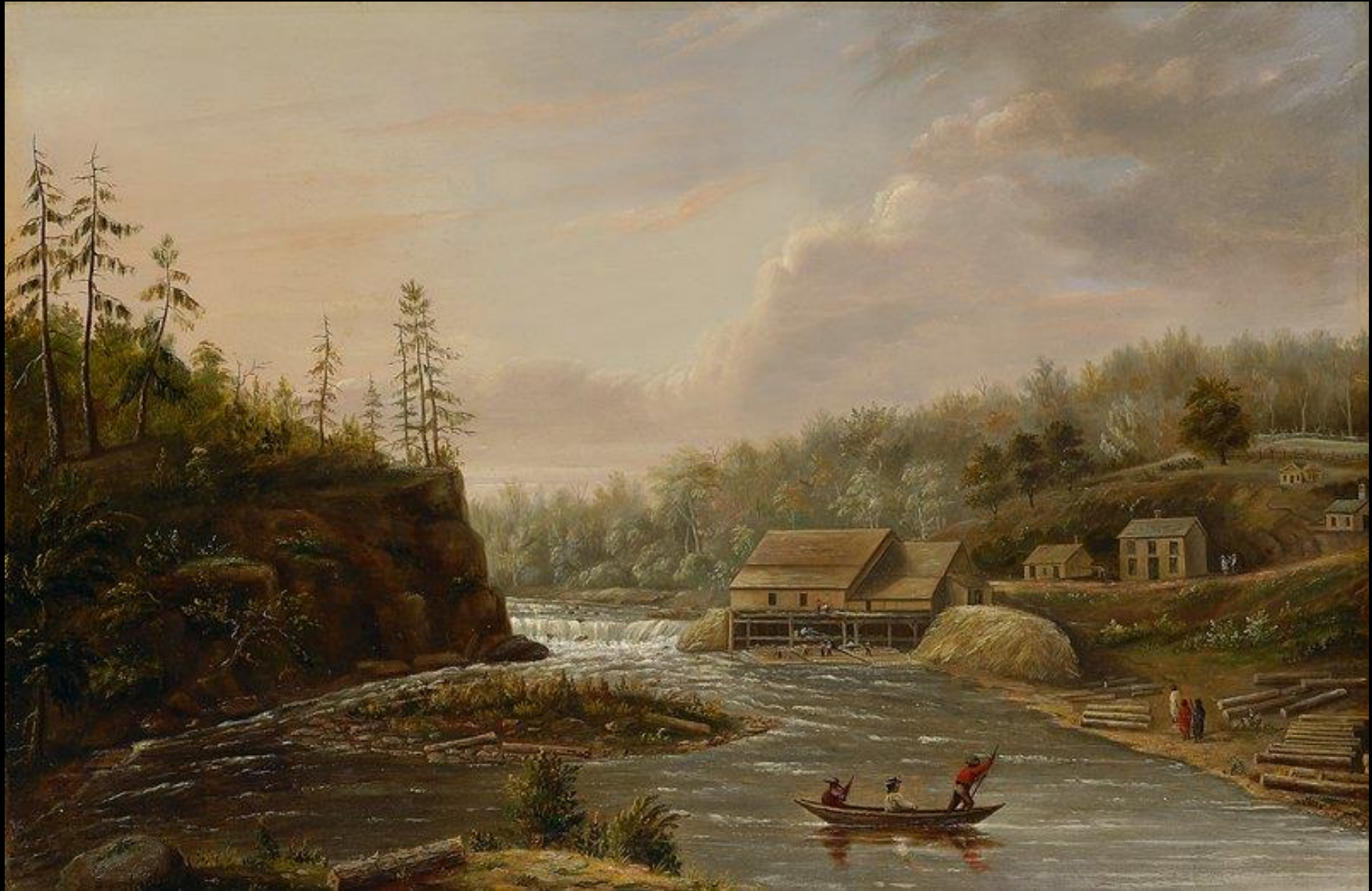
Thomas Moran, *A Scene on the Tohickon Creek: Autumn*, 1868, 68.82



William Trost Richards, *Quiet Seascape*, 1883, 80.67



Local landscapes... Henry Lewis, *Cheever's Mill on the St. Croix River*, 1847, 47.6



Local landscapes: Edward K. Thomas, *View of Fort Snelling*, c. 1850, 68.82



Local landscapes...

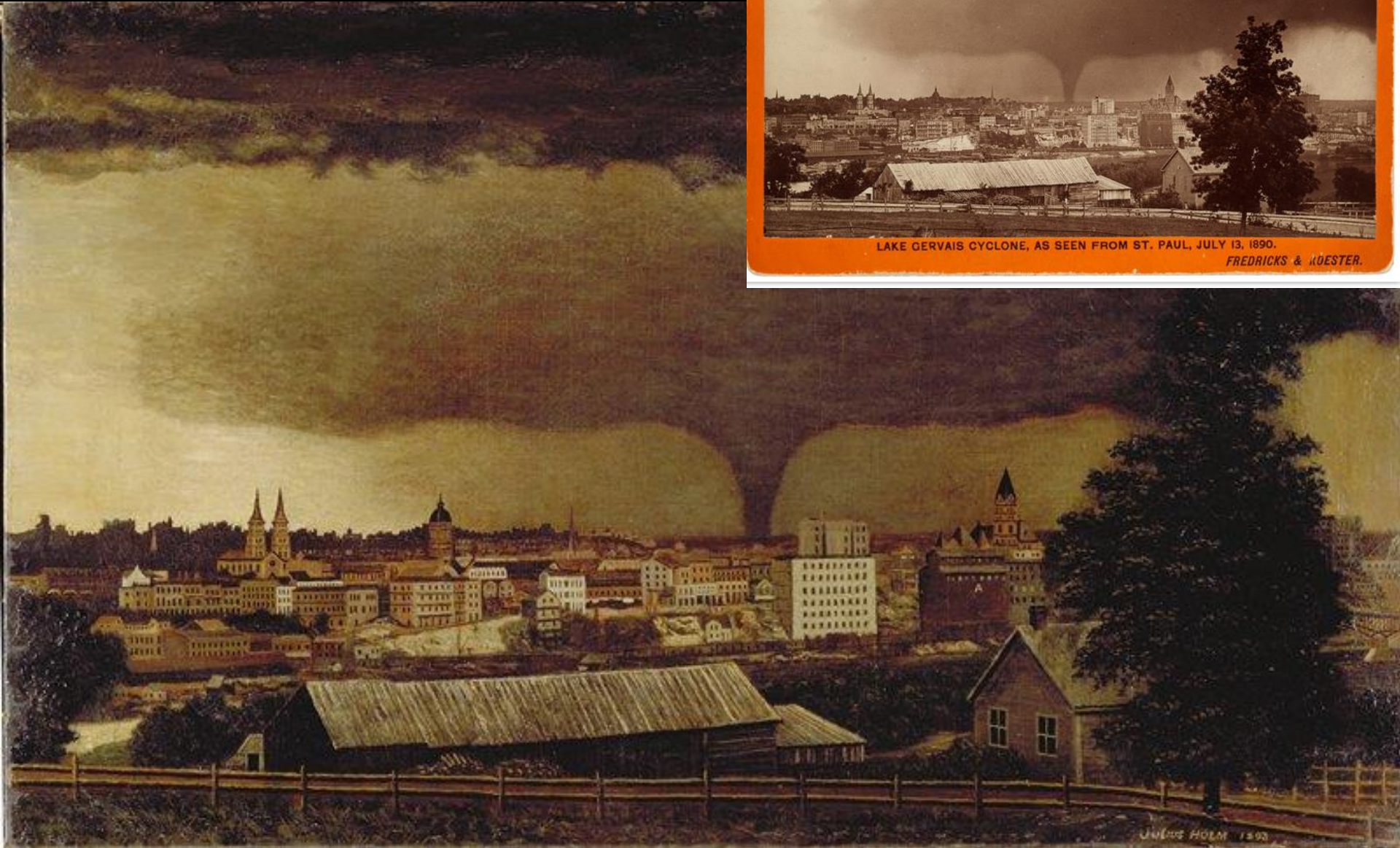
Henry Lewis, *St. Anthony Falls as It Appeared in 1848*, 1855, 28.79 and Seth Eastman, *The Falls of St. Anthony*, 1848, 2009.16.1



Ferdinand Richardt, *Steamwheeler on the Upper Mississippi*, 1865,
2004.211



Julius Holm, *Tornado over St. Paul, 1*



LAKE GERVAIS CYCLONE, AS SEEN FROM ST. PAUL, JULY 13, 1890.
FREDRICKS & RÖESTER.

Julius Holm 1893

Still life

Severin Roesen, *Abundant Fruit*, 1858, 2005.96 and *Still Life with Fruit*, c. 1860, 69.47.



Raphaëlle Peale, *Still Life with Fruit, Cakes and Wine*, 1821, 2008.49



William Michael Harnett, *Still-life with Flute and Times*, 1877,
2015.82.2



